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Education  
Improvement  
Commission

Lawson Block, 13th Floor  
100 Bay St., Toronto  
Ontario M7A 1L2  
(416) 325-1073

[www.edu.gov.on.ca/improvement](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/improvement)

# The Road Ahead

A REPORT ON LEARNING TIME, CLASS SIZE AND STAFFING



The first report of the  
EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION  
August 1997

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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**LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL 01**

**1 INTRODUCTION 02**

**2 THE ROAD MAP:**

**PART ONE — THE SIGNPOSTS “KNOWING WHERE WE'RE GOING” 03**

**PART TWO — THE INFRASTRUCTURE “DEFINING WHO DOES WHAT IN THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY” 04**

**PART THREE — THE RESOURCES “DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY TO MAKE BETTER USE OF WHAT WE HAVE” 06**

**(A) LEARNING TIME 07**

**(B) CLASS SIZE AND SCHOOL ORGANIZATION 15**

**(C) BUILDING MORE EFFECTIVE TEAMS 20**

**3 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS 26**

**4 ENDNOTES 29**

**5 APPENDICES**

**A: MINISTER'S REFERRAL 32**

**B: CONSULTATION PARTICIPANTS 33**

**6 BIBLIOGRAPHY 38**

# Letter of transmittal

August 29, 1997



Dear Minister:

The members of the Education Improvement Commission are pleased to present this first report, which is in response to your request for advice on the following specific issues to assist in developing a new funding model:

1. Ways the government can ensure that average class sizes do not grow beyond current levels.
2. Issues affecting the amount and scheduling of instructional time that teachers spend with their students.
3. Ways to give boards more flexibility in their programme delivery and school organization while ensuring that educational quality is maintained or enhanced.

To carry out this assignment in the relatively short period since your letter of May 29 this year, we have relied heavily upon existing research and analysis. As requested, we have reviewed what the best practices and standards are in other jurisdictions, and particularly in the other Canadian provinces. In addition, we have benefitted greatly from our public consultation sessions held in various centres across Ontario and the wealth of knowledge, commitment and expertise presented by representatives of the various partners within the education community.

We have been especially impressed by the contribution and advice of students and of parents representing school councils. These councils have shown significant growth in recent years and our consultations have been a good start in our mandate to examine their role. We believe that this report will prove helpful as you build the allocation model and we are pleased to have had this opportunity to provide our conclusions and recommendations on some of the key issues involved.

On the subject of using early childhood educators as teachers in junior kindergarten and kindergarten programmes, we regret that time constraints prevented us from dealing fully with this matter. Perhaps you could advise us if you want us to pursue the issue further.

We look forward to continuing to work with you as we carry out our mandate as partners in the education reform process with the goal of improving the quality of education in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Dave Cooke  
Co-Chair

Ann Vanstone  
Co-Chair

Peter Cameron  
Commissioner

Rémi Lessard  
Commissioner

Betty Moseley-Williams  
Commissioner

Mearl Obee  
Commissioner

Arlene Wright  
Commissioner

***"As partners in the education community, we share an historic opportunity to design and implement meaningful change to make our schools better. To be successful, we'll need courage and wisdom to better utilize our resources and to ensure change that benefits our young people and our future. There is no point in reform unless it has a positive impact on student achievement."***

— Ann Vanstone, Co-Chair,  
The Education Improvement Commission

***"One of the great strengths of Ontario's education system is its ability to change. It's important to tie the various reform initiatives together and to envision what education will look like five years from now. A major part of our job at the EIC is to help provide the 'road map' and recommend the structural change needed to get us there."***

— Dave Cooke, Co-Chair,  
The Education Improvement Commission





*"We have an obligation to come up with guidelines and directions that will assist all of us in making the transition. We need a road map."*

— Secondary school representative addressing the EIC's public consultation sessions

*"This government's plan is to give our students the opportunity to be the best in Canada by putting in place an aggressive programme of education reforms. As part of our plan, the Education Improvement Commission was established to ensure a smooth transition to the new district school boards. This will allow students to benefit immediately from a rigorous new province-wide curriculum, regular province-wide testing, a new four-year high school programme and a new approach to funding that are the hallmarks of our plan for education reform."*

— John C. Snobelen,  
Minister of Education and Training

# 1. Introduction

In response to various reports and studies and increased public demand for higher achievement and greater accountability, several initiatives are under way to reform Ontario's school system. While there is a large public appetite for change, there is also considerable concern over where all this change is heading. Where will the system be five years from now? What will our schools look like? The public and various members of the education community are saying, "Show me".

This first report by the Education Improvement Commission, prepared in response to a request by the Minister of Education and Training for advice on some specific issues (Appendix A), provides a road map to where we believe education reform is headed — and the kind of structural changes needed to get us there. It shows how various initiatives converge along the way to arrive at the same goal of improving the quality of education in Ontario.

Our research and public consultations indicate there are three main questions being raised about education reform:

- What will our children learn?
- How will we know they're learning it?

- How do we bring about the change necessary to improve the quality of education?

The new Ontario curriculum for elementary schools and current secondary school reform initiatives will establish what students will learn at each level.

Regular testing through the Education Quality and Assessment Office, standardized report cards and new standards of training and performance for teachers set by The Ontario College of Teachers will provide the quality assurance and accountability being demanded of the system.

This leaves the final question of how to bring about change and ensure it meets the goal of improving the quality of education for our young people and our future. That's where the Education Improvement Commission comes in.

The Commission sees as its role the creation of structures necessary to reach the reform objectives. Some of these structures will be new; others will simply be contemporary models that remove old obstacles, make us more efficient and allow us to get on with the job of making our schools better.

There's no point in reform unless it has

a positive impact on student achievement. At the end of the process, we'll be able to determine whether or not the system is working.

Through careful reading and analysis of the considerable literature available on education reform and current practices and from hearing those who attended our province-wide consultations (Appendix B), we have set out to fulfill the terms of our mandate.

Our overriding goal is to improve the quality of education in Ontario, by ensuring that the focus of the whole reform exercise is the student and the teaching/learning process. We know that to achieve this, our education systems must become more effective and more efficient and we will need wisdom and courage to plan and implement the meaningful change that is required to make all this happen.

To focus on maximizing our resources, in this report we will concentrate on the following:

- the amount of teaching/learning time provided,
- class size and school organization, and
- building better teams through improved use of staff.

By so doing, we will have responded to the request from the Minister for advice on the specific issues of class size, instructional time and programme delivery

in our schools. We recognize that there are additional means of maximizing our resources (such as innovative use of technology) and we look forward

to the opportunity of studying and reporting on these options in the months ahead.

# 2. The Road Map

## PART 1 The Signposts

### "Knowing where we are going"

To reach the goals of education reform we need to establish some fundamental principles or signposts that show where we're headed and what we can expect when we get there. The need for fundamental principles was emphasized to us during our public consultation sessions. We believe these should include the following:

*Meaningful change is required to improve the quality of education and make it possible to better meet the needs of our young people — as today's students and tomorrow's citizens.*

In this period of fast paced change, it is critical that our education system be flexible enough to address current and future needs. Institutional rigidity, whether it stems from legislation, collective agreements or adherence to past practice, jeopardizes the opportunities for our students to achieve.

For example, there is little benefit in establishing new district school boards if they are going to continue operating as they always have.

*While consistently high standards of programmes and services must be established and maintained across the province, education systems must be sufficiently flexible to respond to Ontario's great diversities.*

There is strength derived from the diverse ethnic background, language, student population, economic circumstances and geography within Ontario. As neighbourhoods and communities differ, so do our local schools. The distinctive cultures within aboriginal communities, as well as separate and public, French and English school boards, must not only be recognized but encouraged.

*District school boards must be empowered and encouraged to implement creative, cost effective and educationally sound solutions that work for them in addressing the challenges they face.*

Some school boards have developed ways to cope with reduced funding, higher labour costs, changing student populations, and increased demands for services and public accountability. Too often, however, their efforts have been impeded by existing legislation, policy, collective agreement restrictions and adherence to past practice.

*The major focus of education has to be on the quality of results achieved by our students. To ensure consistency and equity throughout the province, these results must be clearly delineated at the provincial level.*

For too long, we've been paying more attention to the resources we put into education than to the results we're getting out of it. Emphasis has been on increasing spending, staff, professional development and preparation time — with insufficient evidence of what impact all of this has on students and learning. Recent reform initiatives are important steps towards a





shift in focus. It is critical that the Ministry of Education and Training continue to take the lead in determining the level of results to be achieved across the province. Only a provincial focus on results can ensure equality of education outcomes.

*The full implementation of education finance reform should be phased in over a period of not less than five years.*

Careful planning and appropriate pacing are fundamental to successful change. Boards must be given time to adjust and to put in place effective strategies to maximize the advantages of additional resources or to minimize the impact of further reductions. It is important that even those that stand to gain do not spend "new" money in "old" ways.

*The various partners in the education community need clearly defined roles and responsibilities so they can get on with the job of operating an effective, efficient and accountable school system.*

There is growing obscurity and uncertainty over the roles and responsibilities of the different levels and partners within the education community. It has often been said, for example, that education roles don't change or disappear with the times; they are simply "collected" and made add-ons of responsibility. There is also the common complaint that at times staff are prevented from

carrying out roles they are trained and paid to perform. At the same time, it's important to recognize that a student's family plays the first and most important role in each child's learning.

## **PART 2**

### **The Infrastructure**

#### **"Partners in Education – Who does what in the education community"**

Various structural changes are required to support the reform process. Recognition and clarification of roles and responsibilities among the partners in the education process will increase efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in the system. The Commission regards providing advice and direction on role definition as an important part of its mandate over the next four years and begins with the following overview:

##### **(a) At the Provincial Level:**

The Ministry of Education and Training should be responsible for establishing what students will know and be able to demonstrate at each grade level and particularly upon graduation.

As well, with regard to finance, we believe it is the Ministry's responsibility to provide sufficient funding to ensure that the desired quality of results can be achieved.

The Education Quality and Accountability Office, an arms-length agency of the Ministry, will continue to play the increasingly important role of monitoring achievement of these results, as well as ensuring accountability throughout the system.

Province-wide assessments, reporting systems and the creation of a standard curriculum and report card are significant steps toward the achievement of these goals.

The Ontario College of Teachers will take the lead in guaranteeing that province-wide consistency is maintained in teacher qualifications, certification, standards of practice, and mandatory professional development.

#### ***Implications:***

To ensure that progress in the reform process continues, the province must further clarify expectations of all the education partners. The funding model must address the recognized operational expenses of boards throughout the province and support local flexibility and efforts to maximize efficiency. Ministry policy and legislation must be reviewed to ensure that any roadblocks to maximizing the potential of local creativity are removed.

##### **(b) At the District School Board Level:**

Trustees will continue to play a vital leadership role. District school boards will develop policies and procedures that are based on provincial parameters, foster consistency of

results and maximize efficiency.

We agree wholeheartedly with the Royal Commission's following conclusion:

***... school boards are necessary in translating provincial policy into local contexts, for setting local priorities, and for providing co-ordination and support for their schools.'***

The boards will ensure that there is compliance with Ministry policy throughout their area of jurisdiction, with their directors of education responsible for this accountability. As employers of both teaching and support staff, boards will continue to fulfill the important role of having in place adequate, personnel to meet the needs of their students.

Although local schools will be given more autonomy, the district school boards will continue to be responsible for system-wide policies and services. They will take the lead role in developing cooperative agreements with co-terminus boards and agencies within the broader community and in forming partnerships with service agencies, businesses and other district school boards to attain efficiencies and meet common objectives.

### ***Implications:***

District school boards will place a major emphasis on guaranteeing that consistency of student achievement is realized in an efficient manner throughout larger geographical areas than currently exist. While the province will take the lead in establishing the goals of education and measuring

results, the district school boards will hold each school accountable for the achievement of its students. This will greatly affect the role of supervisory officers, who will focus more on supervision and support to ensure that achievement targets are met. Other system level roles will be affected as monitoring of programmes, performance appraisal and professional development take on increased importance. It will be critical for supervisory officers and trustees to be involved in training sessions that clarify their new roles and develop skills essential for success. The formation of partnerships with local agencies, businesses and industries will continue to expand in importance, as will the formation of mutually supportive arrangements with neighbouring boards and other district school boards throughout the province.

#### **(c) At the Local School Community Level:**

The local community will play a greater role in determining how education is delivered.

Individual schools will reflect and respond to the culture and priorities of the local neighbourhoods and maximize the benefits of active involvement by their students' families in the learning process. Local schools will have greater decision-making responsibilities as well as fostering high student achievement and developing a close

working relationship with the local community.

Principals will play the key leadership role in this new vision of education. They will continue to manage their schools and fulfill their valuable role as instructional leaders. Added to this will be important functions relating to drawing on the resources of the local community, seeking and responding to input from staff, parents and community representatives as well as taking greater responsibility for achieving district school board objectives. The principal will lead staff in developing innovative, flexible programmes and structures to respond to the needs and strengths within each school.

A wide range of programme delivery models will be used, including flexible groupings of students, scheduling of time and use of technology. The focus will be on what achieves the desired results.

In our classrooms there will be greater flexibility and interaction among colleagues. Staff will work increasingly as teams. The isolated teacher will become much less common, replaced by a staff team approach that provides for flexibility of grouping and timing based on the needs of students and the nature of the subject being learned. The focus at the school level will move from what is to be covered to how our higher standards of achievement can be reached.





School councils will have an expanding importance as representatives of the community in the education system. They will play a critical role in advising principals and ensuring that the schools respond to local needs and reflect local values. The councils will respect and encourage the pivotal role of parents in the school system and in the learning process.

The Commission agrees with the Royal Commission's comments about the role of our local schools:

*Because schools are at the heart of the education system, they must be at the centre of change in education. Change can only occur through a realignment of roles and responsibilities of the key players at the school level.<sup>2</sup>*

### **Implications:**

The role of principal will change more than any other within the system. It is critical that this role be further clarified and that considerable professional training be offered – including major revisions to current certification programmes. Staff performance appraisals, programme review, school improvement planning and effective interaction with parents and the community are all skills that will need to be strengthened. Similarly, the role of school councils will need to be reviewed and clarified with considerable training support for existing and new members. While there has been considerable progress in this area, more attention must be paid to differentiating

between the roles of school councils and district school boards, as well as to accountability, communications and consultation strategies.

## **PART 3**

### **The Resources**

#### **“Doing things differently to make better use of what we have”**

In response to the Minister's request for advice on class size, instructional time and programme delivery, we believe it is important to stress how interrelated these issues are. While we have analyzed each independently, it is impossible to deal with any one in isolation from the others.

Instructional time and programme delivery, for example, are among the various tools available to influence class size levels. The amount of time students spend on learning is an important factor in determining their achievement levels and their ability to compete with graduates of education systems in other jurisdictions.

Our public consultations showed us that the protection of class size is a priority with members of the education community – including parents, teachers, trustees and school administrators. We were struck by the perception that there has been a significant increase in class size in recent

years — a perception which is not generally supported by the evidence.

We have considered class size in the context of its vulnerability when budgets are being reduced. We believe that making better use of our resources is a much wiser option than increasing class size and one way to do that is to increase the amount of time teachers teach. By increasing the time teachers spend teaching, savings will be produced which can be used in the classroom.

But additional teaching time produces more than just financial benefits for education systems. Clearly, students in Ontario need and deserve to have instructional hours more in line with their counterparts in other parts of Canada if they are to compete effectively on inter-provincial comparisons and on national tests. In response to this need, we believe the school year needs to be lengthened.

Our conclusions and recommendations on these and other crucial issues are set out in the following pages under these headings:

- (a) learning time
- (b) class size and school organization, and
- (c) building more effective teams.

## (A) Learning Time

### BACKGROUND

The length of the school year and school day are defined at the provincial level in Regulations 304 and 298 respectively. In each case, however, it is the minimum that is fixed with 194 days per school year and five instructional hours per day. Within this set time, there are provisions for "up to nine" professional development days and for secondary schools, "up to fifteen instructional days as exam days". In total, therefore, there are a minimum of 185 legislated instructional days in the elementary and 170 in the secondary school year. Despite widespread changes in our schools and in society, the school day and year have remained constant since they were set in 1973. In most cases, the minimum number of hours and days have become the rule in schools throughout the province. Similarly, the maximum number of professional development days has become the actual in most jurisdictions. Of twenty countries surveyed, in terms of number of school days, Canada was tenth with an average of 188 school days. In comparison, China was the highest with 251 days and Portugal the lowest with 172. Ontario's 300-minute instructional day places us eighth of twenty jurisdictions with France maintaining the longest at 370 minutes and Brazil the shortest at 223 minutes. Although the five-hour

instructional day, with provisions to reduce for kindergarten and special needs programmes, is relatively constant across the country, there is an increasing variation in the length of the school year. A number of provinces have set the school year at 200 days (Saskatchewan, Alberta, Quebec), modified the number of professional development days, and reduced the number of examination days. In British Columbia, for example, examination days are clearly defined as "no more than seven days" within a minimum of 188 school days.

When this is translated into the number of instructional hours per year for elementary and secondary school students, **it can be seen that Ontario students receive substantially fewer hours of instruction than do students in some other jurisdictions.** As an illustration, provincial guidelines in Alberta require that students receive 950 hours of instruction per year in elementary schools and 1000 hours per year in secondary schools. By comparison, Ontario students receive 925 hours of instruction per year in elementary schools and 850 hours in secondary schools.<sup>3</sup>

Some provinces have shifted to ten designated professional development days within a longer school year (Prince Edward Island, Manitoba) while others maintain between five and seven with clear parameters for how and when these days will be used.

In New Brunswick, for example, the government has set the school year at 187 days with seven professional development and one administrative day, all of which are to "be held during school breaks" ensuring that "the 187 days be full days" with sporting events held outside of school hours and only two days within any school year being allowed for storm days.<sup>4</sup>

### CHART A: AVERAGE DAYS IN THE SCHOOL YEAR

Length of School Year	
China	251
Korea	222
Taiwan	222
Israel	215
Switzerland	207
Italy	204
Soviet Union	198
England	192
Scotland	191
Jordan	191
Slovenia	190
Spain	188
Ontario – average	185
United States	178
Hungary	177
France	174
Ireland	173
Portugal	172

\* international comparisons from a selected sample from National Centre of Educational Statistics, Washington DC – 1991, for 13-year-old students

### CONTEXT

The public perception that time is misused or underutilized in public education was supported during our consultations and in our review of research. It appears to be a commonly held belief that if you add more time, student achievement will improve. The variable that is focused upon by the public is amount of time (i.e., length of





*... there was concern expressed at our school by the principal as well as some parents that there seem to be too many interruptions in teaching time...*

*(Parent, Northern Ontario)*

*Time on task is the single most important variable in acquiring a new skill. Changes to the school day should definitely incorporate increased pupil/teacher contact.*

*(Chair, Northwestern Ontario)*

*We have devised a "modified" school year calendar, along with our co-terminus Board, which requires teachers to return to work for a three day period in late August to prepare formally for the upcoming year. We have minimized single day disruptions throughout the school year and clustered holidays for a longer March Break. One full day is used for elementary school parent/teacher conferencing and in the secondary schools for a semester turnaround day.*

*(LEIC Co-chair, Southwestern Ontario)*

school year and/or school day). In considering both these variables, however, it is important to differentiate between the allocated instructional time (i.e. time that students are required to be in attendance), and the time that is spent in class with staff on curriculum-oriented learning. That is, it is important to consider both the amount of time allocated and the use and distribution of that time for focused student learning.<sup>5</sup> Our central focus on time in relation to student learning and achievement should emphasize an increase in the amount of time available for learning while at the same time making it more productive.

### **THE SCHOOL DAY**

In general, we found agreement that the Ministry of Education and Training should continue to set the number of instructional hours and allow for flexibility of scheduling at the local level. There was consensus that the existing instructional day of at least five hours is adequate with many, especially parents, supporting the idea of lengthening the school day to include extra-curricular and remedial programmes while protecting the five-hour instructional day for curricular and clearly defined co-curricular learning.

In general, the recurrent issue was not the legislated length of the day, but the number of interruptions that occurred during the year which diminished instructional time.

The inclusion of preparation time within the instructional day was identified as a key issue and will be further discussed below. Various students, teachers, principals, and directors of education emphasized that an extension of the day would have an impact on the ability of secondary students to hold part-time jobs. Participants from rural and northern boards were almost unanimous in expressing concern that a lengthening of the school day would be problematic for students because of the long bus rides and shortened winter daylight hours.

In general, the perception is that the current length of the school day is appropriate and that any significant increases would place excessive demand on children's time and would be seen by some as a disruption to family life. Rather than altering the number of hours within a day, there was consistent support for ensuring that the day be used more productively.

### **Recommendation 1.1**

**That the role of the teacher as set out in the Education Act and Regulations be clarified to indicate that the work day for teachers not be limited to the time of attendance by students, and that it include responsibility for extra curricular activities, preparation for class, professional development, contact with parents and remedial assistance for students.**

### **Recommendation 1.2**

**That the principal be empowered to deploy staff so that teacher-pupil contact time increases.**

### **THE SCHOOL YEAR**

During our consultation, there was significant support for an extension of the school year. The most common figure suggested was a ten-day extension (to be allocated in August or June depending on local needs). Attention also focused on how the year was organized with different ideas emerging from different parts of the province. In some regions, for instance, many days during the year are lost due to weather conditions and it was suggested that more time be placed in August – or that flexible days be included at the end of the year – to compensate for time lost. For secondary school students, a concern regarding the extension of the school year related to loss of work time during the summer months.

In general, support for increasing the length of the school year stemmed from concerns regarding the number and length of "interruptions". In addition to "snow days", which an Eastern Ontario principal estimated at from five to eight days per year, respondents mentioned such items as field trips, extra curricular events, examination days, and professional development days as

breaking the continuity of the year and reducing instructional time.

Discussion of the school year frequently led to debates around the issue of alternative scheduling of time over the year.

It was pointed out by many that the opportunity to vary the schedule already exists under the *Education Act* and Regulation 304. Examples of alternative schedules and their merits to schools across Ontario were identified. It was apparent from many respondents, however, that there is concern that an alternative schedule might be adopted provincially (or locally for that matter) and that it might be imposed on the education community. The need for local flexibility and, where possible, options for individual families was stressed.

Overall, there was support for the existing practice of the province establishing the school year schedule and allowing for flexibility at the local level. There was widespread approval for some form of increase in the school year to reduce the impact of lost time.

*Recommendation 17:*  
That the number of days in the instructional year for students be increased by two weeks in elementary schools and by three weeks in secondary schools (which would include the reduced number of examination days).

That the school year for students begin on the Monday preceding Labour Day.

That the number of examination days at the secondary school level, currently set at a maximum of fifteen, be reduced to a maximum of ten.

(See *CHART B* on page 10.)

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At the outset, it is important to establish that **professional activity days** fall within two categories:

- those for the professional development of staff
- those for other activities such as parent/teacher conferences.

Similarly, **professional development** falls into two categories:

- that related to the personal, professional growth of the individual. [Such professional development is generally done outside of school hours.]
- that related to initiatives from the Ministry, district school board or local school. [Such professional development frequently occurs during professional activity days.]

The importance of ongoing professional development for teachers and other staff was strongly supported throughout our consultations. There was general agreement that professional development days should continue to exist, with parents stressing the need for a clearer sense of what these days are used for.

It was also suggested that access to professional activities be increased so that others could share in the benefits of the professional development process:

*... Opening some or all professional development sessions to parents could help the parents in their struggles to help their children to succeed in school.*

(Chair, RCSSB School Council, Northern Ontario)

Suggestions that two of the existing nine professional days be kept within the instructional year for teacher-parent interviews was strongly supported and encouraged by parents who pointed out the value of having time for teachers, parents/guardians, and students to meet together for interviews. Initiatives directed toward re-defining professional development days to distinguish between professional **activity** days (e.g. parent-teacher interviews, administration days, federation days) and professional **development** days received unanimous support from all groups as a method of formally recognizing what is already taking place in school boards.



*The Minister could define the school year to start on the Monday preceding Labour Day and end on June 30th. Within the school year, five professional activity days could be scheduled prior to the start of the school year and five professional activity days could be scheduled during the school year. The remaining days would be instructional days for students and teachers.*

(Director of Education, Southwestern Ontario)

*Schools should schedule exams in a more condensed time frame; a reasonable amount of days should be scheduled as study days; instruction time should be scheduled even during exams.*

(Ontario Federation of Catholic School Associations)

*Restructuring the school year is long overdue. It is an Agrarian Model, originally used to accommodate the farming seasons. It is unsuited to present realities.*

(Chair, Northwestern Ontario)



... in many cases it is simply a matter of perception – perhaps the public perception could be improved by publishing the timetable for a P.D. day so that the parents would understand what is happening.

(AEFO)

With the teachers being available for a portion of the summer, then the present nine professional development days during the school year could be greatly reduced.

(Director, Northeastern Ontario)

HOW THE SCHOOL YEAR WILL CHANGE ...				
Currently ...	Teaching Days	EIC Proposes ...	Teaching Days	
Length of School Year	Labour day to end of June Initial length of year = 194 days	Start in the last week of August Initial length now =	200 days	
<u>Add one week to school year for all students</u>				
Professional Activity Days	Nine scheduled during school year  After 9 PA days, year = 185 days	Schedule five during school year, schedule another five outside of student school year in third week of August with only 5 PA days in-year, the year =	195 days	
<u>Add another week to school year for all students</u>				
Examination Days	15 during secondary school year for secondary students, year = 170 days	only ten Examination Days the year for secondary students =	185 days	
<u>Add a third week to school year for secondary students</u>				
Total Teaching Days in School Year	– elementary – secondary – teachers assigned year  185 days 170 days 194 days	– elementary – increase 10 days – secondary – increase 15 days – teachers assigned year	195 days 185 days 205 days	

**Results:** School year increased by two weeks for elementary students  
School year increased by three weeks for secondary students

Respondents voiced general support for accommodating professional development during an extended school year, with time at the end of August being referenced most often.

It was argued by many that this would successfully (and efficiently) decrease the number of days during the year that interrupt instructional time.

The current level of involvement of teachers in professional development was acknowledged by most respondents. In particular, directors and chairs of boards reminded us of the number of innovative models of delivery that exist in various parts of the

province. In our research into the literature on professional development we found significant reasons for supporting further innovations in this direction. Although not discussed at length during our consultations there are strong reasons to believe that ongoing professional development is important to student learning and achievement, a point illustrated, in part, by changes in its delivery since the 1980s:

***Today there is more interest in professional development, more funding made available for programmes, more creativity in designing the programme/process, and more variety in the sources of funding.***

While the old 'in-service' model of training focused extensively on the individual teacher's development, current frameworks of staff or professional development "focus on all levels: the individual teacher, the staff, the school"<sup>7</sup> with a view toward improved practices, the creation of new school cultures and ultimately, improved student learning. The notion of both students and school staff as life-long learners is a driving force behind new ways of thinking about professional development.

Professional Development, although not a panacea, is important to successful school improvement and the quality of teaching

and learning.<sup>6</sup> As schools invest in development opportunities for all school staff, they need to direct attention to two key outcomes centred around strategies that will "enable the students to learn the information, skills, concepts and values that comprise the curriculum ... and increase the students' ability to learn in their future".<sup>7</sup>

The "one-shot" workshop, as most teachers know, is ineffective towards this end. We agree that many of the best practices associated with effective professional development are already taking place across the province. Professional development consortia, the French Language System Teacher Centres (RÉSEAU de formation et de programmation), school-university partnerships for pre- and in-service programme delivery, and school-based improvement teams are only a few examples. These activities take place throughout the school year and we recognize the commitment of individuals and staff teams to professional development as an ongoing aspect of their school's focus on learning. We emphasize the need for continued recognition that professional development is best based on the 'whole-school' concept where growth is enabled for all "including school leaders [directors of education, principals, teachers, and existing and emergent leaders], and for support staff, from school psychologists and counselors to teachers' aides".<sup>11</sup>

Successful school change and student achievement requires learning time for everyone in the system.

**That the number of days scheduled for professional activity purposes during the school year for students be set at five.**

**Recommendation 7.8**  
That a minimum of two of these five professional activity days be designated for assessment of student achievement and reporting to parents.

**Recommendation 7.9**  
That the school year for teachers begin one full week prior to the opening of school, with at least three of these days designated for professional development purposes under the direction of the school principal and subject to the approval of the director of education.

## **PREPARATION TIME**

The increased demand on teachers is widely recognized, along with the changing nature of our schools as they respond to social and economic changes in society. Stressful working conditions and the need for individual attention for a growing number of students with special needs were cited as realities within the contemporary school environment.

During our consultations, many spoke at length on the value of preparation time for individualized instruction, consultation with parents and colleagues, and instructional planning.

Frequently, it was commented that teachers have a large number of professional responsibilities that must be met outside of classroom instructional time.

*Preparation time is essential to provide teachers with the necessary time to modify and differentiate programming for students and to develop themselves professionally. Professional development that is practical, current and developmental is the most successful ... Teachers new to the profession or to special education should receive a portion of the preparation time in a mentoring situation.*

*(Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education)*

There were also concerns expressed about the range of different demands on teachers depending on their role and, in particular, their involvement in extra-curricular activities and sports. Thus, while some acknowledged the potential benefit of scheduling preparation time outside of the instructional day for students it was also recommended that accommodation should be made for teachers who commit more time to such activities and for new teachers and their mentor teachers.

**Recommendation 7.9**

That recognition be given to the value of preparation time for teachers within the



... a "collaborative culture" focused on instruction and student achievement is a powerful force for improving schools<sup>10</sup>

**There are a number of ways to provide professional development for teachers. Site-based professional development is geared to a school success plan. It is a valuable, flexible method of P.D. that takes into account where each staff member is on the learning curve. Regional P.D. provides a chance to get beyond the confines of their own teaching environment to learn additional skills in their larger community. Individuals may also investigate their own areas of interest for professional development. Providing financial support for professional development through STPDL [Short term professional development leave] funding encourages teachers to investigate new programmes and strategies which will enhance their professionalism and improve student performance.**

*(Teaching Assistants' Association Representatives, Central Ontario)*



*Time spent by teachers in lesson preparation and programme planning translates into improved education for students, and must be taken into account in planning the structure of the school day. The amount of formalized planning and preparation time, and the specific way in which it should be incorporated into the school day in order to best serve the interests of students are issues which require further study.*

*(Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association)*

*Unassigned classroom time contributes to the quality of education by allocating time for teachers to prepare lessons, materials and resources; assess and report; revise and update curriculum; consult with staff, parents and other professionals. More unassigned time is needed for beginning teachers, teachers implementing change, teachers in classrooms which require a lot of preparation (e.g. science, family studies) ... unassigned time should be allocated to the school and directed by the principal on the basis of need ...*

*(Director, Northeastern Ontario)*

*In the past thirty years teachers have been required to take on more and more. Legislating prep-time out of the school day without adding staff to complete some of the these tasks [e.g. clerical] would be grossly unfair.*

*(Supervisory Officer, Southern Ontario)*

**students' instructional day and that the cost be considered in the funding formula.**

There were many participants who questioned the current approach of providing all teachers with equal preparation time within the instructional day. For example, a few argued that new teachers have greater needs in terms of developing lessons, and that teachers of some subjects have greater marking loads than others.

**That decisions regarding the allocation of preparation time for individual teachers be made by the school principal in consultation with the school staff and in recognition of the varying needs of different teachers with different work loads and at different stages of their careers. In addition, that consideration be given to the bundling of preparation time for elementary teachers so that group planning can be done.**

## **ADMINISTRATION TIME**

*Perhaps a key to understanding secondary school change is the realization that individuals are being challenged to change images: images of professional identity; images of successful secondary school education; and images of change.<sup>12</sup>*

It was suggested by many participants that additional instructional time, reduced class sizes and cost savings could be gained by

reducing the amount of non-instructional time allocated to vice-principals and department heads in recognition of their positions of added responsibility. In the case of department heads, for example, one non-instructional period in addition to preparation and on-call time was viewed as an inefficient use of teaching staff. From our consultation, it is apparent that the role of department head is only vaguely understood, a point that has also been clearly documented in the research on secondary schools. Research indicates that the work of department heads is commonly "ill-defined and widely variable".<sup>13</sup>

During consultations, we heard many examples of schools that have already successfully re-organized secondary school staffing by working co-operatively with teachers, support staff, and teacher federations to redefine teacher roles and the organization of their workload.

These included changes to the organization of subject departments to create integrated units and/or the removal of "release" time traditionally allotted to department heads. In essence, there are an increasing number of schools which are "challenging the timetable" or "retiming" the school day and year.<sup>14</sup> In addition, some schools have taken steps to change the traditional "balkanization of secondary school structures".<sup>15</sup> All of these initiatives contribute

to decreasing the inefficiencies that are typically associated with the organization of time and staff in secondary schools. Similar to recommendations made by the Royal Commission on Learning, however, the impetus remains for further review of "the role of the department head ... with a view to reducing the number of heads where appropriate"<sup>16</sup> and additionally, refocusing more of their time away from administrative roles to teaching roles.

A few respondents also suggested that educators such as vice-principals spend too much of their time doing administrative and clerical tasks that could be handled efficiently by staff with other qualifications (potentially resulting in greater efficiency and reduced costs). We heard many examples, most notably in small schools, where vice-principals took on partial teaching loads and/or divided their time between schools. Similar to suggestions for collaborative staffing models in the organization of department head positions, there was strong support for changes to what appears as a commonly taken-for-granted practice of staffing administrative positions within schools.

Parent groups and many directors of education and board chairs supported the suggestion that the secondary school department structure be re-organized to reduce the number of departmental administration

positions and enhance a more integrated approach to programming.

**That the number of secondary school departments be reduced; and in order to increase the integration of learning, that they no longer be organized by subject; and further, as a result, that qualifications and duties of department heads be reviewed.**

#### *Recommendation 1.12*

That secondary school department heads carry the same teaching load as other full-time teaching staff.

#### **RESEARCH**

Much of the relevant research regarding time focuses on it as an essential resource for both students and teachers. Many of the ideas that have emerged since the 1970s are supportive of points raised during our consultation. In cases where a positive correlation has been found between time and achievement on mathematics and language scores, the length of the school year versus school day has been found to be of greater importance.<sup>17</sup>

It is apparent that what goes on during the allocated time (time-on-task) is of much greater significance than the amount of time scheduled (time allocated for learning).

Numerous studies support the perception expressed during our consultation that dis-

ruptions to the school day and year detract from student learning. In effect, therefore, time can have a positive impact on student learning when it is used effectively for curricular and co-curricular learning activities.

Although the findings are mixed, there is little to support the notion that alternative scheduling of the school day has a direct impact on student achievement. On the other hand, initiatives such as block scheduling models can create extended periods of learning time and enable an interdisciplinary approach to course delivery, team planning and co-operative learning – all of which have been found to have a positive impact on student learning.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, such scheduling models protect instructional 'on-task' time by providing longer blocks of planning time per week, semester or year versus shorter blocks each day. There is general agreement in the research that schools could use existing time more effectively. Less time spent on administrative tasks (i.e. by teachers, during instructional hours) and more spent on provision of instruction provides a starting point for schools to begin a process of determining how time could be used differently and ultimately, more productively.

Teaching time also relates to the amount of scheduled preparation time within the instructional week. Collective agreements in

Ontario's publicly funded school systems generally allow secondary school teachers 375 minutes of preparatory time per instructional week, which is more than in any other province. A 1996 Ministry of Education and Training survey indicates that "non-contact" time for secondary school teachers in other provinces ranges from a high of 310 minutes per week in New Brunswick and 300 minutes in Quebec and Saskatchewan to a low of 188 minutes per week in Alberta, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia. Elementary school teachers in Ontario, on average, are allowed 160 minutes of preparatory time per instructional week, compared to a national average (including Ontario) of 154 minutes. The range of "non-contact" time per week for elementary school teachers runs from a high of 240 minutes in Quebec to a low of 67 minutes in Manitoba. This means that secondary school teachers in Ontario spend an average of three hours and forty-five minutes teaching in the classroom each day, while elementary teachers spend an average of four hours and twenty-eight minutes in the classroom each day. In other provinces, elementary and secondary teachers spend an average of four hours and twenty-three minutes in the classroom each day.<sup>19</sup>

While the Commission recognizes the value of planning and preparation time, reducing



***Consideration should be given to requiring principals, department heads and other administrative staff to take on part-load teaching or to increase existing teaching loads. This would have the dual benefit of conserving funds and keeping these people up to speed on teaching practices and problems.***

*(The Ontario Coalition for Education Reform)*

***In our small Board, seven principals are half-time teaching principals. The Board designed this operating mode rather than grouping schools under a principal, for human and curriculum reasons. Having principals acting as bureaucrats does not meet the needs of pupils, teachers and communities.***

*(Director, Northeastern Ontario, RCSSB)*



*As a general rule, the closer the decision-making power is to the area of the problem, the quicker and more efficient a solution will be found. In order to give flexibility, you must give decision-making power to those who are close to the educational act.*

*(Director, Northeastern Ontario, RCSSB)*

the amount of time used for these functions would increase the amount of time that teachers spend in classrooms with their pupils. Such as reduction would also be the source of potential savings within the publicly funded education systems as fewer teachers would be required to replace regular teachers during preparation time.

Ontario's school boards reported that, in 1996, the cost of "non-contact" time within the instructional week was more than \$903.4 million. Decreasing the amount of preparation time in the instructional week by a minimum of 25 per cent in secondary schools would free an estimated \$137 million, or as many as 2,719 person-years of teaching time, for use elsewhere in the education systems. It is recognized that, in some boards, these savings would be reduced to some degree, by increased costs for supply teachers to replace absent teachers who are currently replaced by regular classroom teachers who are on call.

With regard to the issue of preparation time, concern was expressed by many regarding the different provisions for secondary and elementary school teachers. It was pointed out by many presenters that secondary school teachers have a favourable position in relation to their elementary peers in terms of time allocated for preparation. The need for greater equity between the two panels was emphasized.

**That the funding formula to be developed recognize that, on average, current allocations of preparation time at the elementary level are appropriate.**

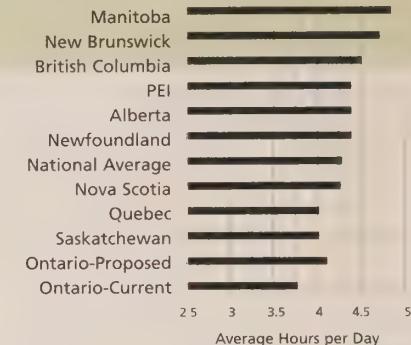
**That the current allocation of preparation time at the secondary level be reduced by at least 25 per cent, on average, and that the funding formula to be developed reflect this.**

It is apparent from the various considerations outlined above that time is a very significant consideration in the effective delivery of education. We are convinced that there would be little merit in simply increasing either the length of the instructional day or year without addressing other issues such as the timing of professional development and teacher preparation, scheduling of examinations, and allocation of administrative tasks. In setting the ground rules for education in this province, the Ministry of Education and Training must address time provisions. Once these adjustments are made, district school board officials and school principals must be empowered to maximize the use of the allocated time.

The funding formula should be based on a recognized, equitable allocation to all jurisdictions, enabling each district school

board to establish its priorities within its total budget.

#### **INTERPROVINCIAL COMPARISON: Teaching Time in Secondary Schools**



## (B) Class Size and School Organization

### BACKGROUND

On the issue of class size, the Commission was asked specifically to suggest "ways the government can ensure that average class sizes do not grow beyond current levels". Questions similar to this are currently being asked across Canada, the United States, Australia and England as district, provincial or national budgets are adjusted to reflect new visions of teaching and learning. A growing number of innovative approaches to staffing and scheduling are emerging as teachers, teacher federations, school boards and provincial or national governments work together to focus on results rather than expenditure levels. Similar efforts have emerged in the Ontario context. The principles behind these co-operative and innovative strategies are reflected in both the text and in the recommendations that we make throughout this report.

We faced several challenges in attempting to make comparisons in the numbers across jurisdictions or over time. First, there are no data on class size that have been gathered in a consistent format. The Education Relations Commission's recent inter-provincial comparison of class size provisions within collective agreements constitutes

base line information for future comparisons. Within collective agreements, the primary measure of class size has been Pupil/Teacher Ratio (PTR), a calculation which usually compares the total number of pupils to the total number of teachers on contract with a board. To further complicate the issue, even PTR is calculated differently from board to board<sup>20</sup> depending upon whether or not central staff and administrators are counted. Therefore, comparisons of 'actual' class size (i.e., the number of students within a particular class) are difficult to make. Staff to student ratio discussions have generally been tied to the collective bargaining process and have focused largely on considerations of teacher work load. During our consultations there were strong suggestions that clear data on actual class size be shared on a province wide basis. In order to reach an accurate baseline of **actual** class sizes many participants emphasized the need to define the calculation of teacher-pupil ratios more clearly and consistently. There was a certain level of agreement that support and administrative staff (including principals and vice principals) who do not work directly with students be removed from the calculation. Conversely, there were also strong arguments presented for the continued inclusion of a range of staff to recognize that students

require services beyond the classroom such as library, guidance and computer services.

That the Minister, in collaboration with his counterparts in the other provinces and territories, establish consistent data in areas such as class size, preparation time, the number of days in the school year and pupil/teacher ratio to allow for better inter-provincial comparisons.

All members of the Education Improvement Commission share the Minister's concern that class sizes may increase in the next few years, particularly in those boards which will face budget reductions due to changes in the funding model. Increases to class size and the elimination of school programmes are sometimes seen as the most expedient methods of reducing costs.<sup>21</sup> Our objective is to determine how school staffing and programme delivery can be reorganized to enhance the quality, flexibility and efficiency of schools.

The Commission recognizes that increases to class size pose a particular dilemma for the Minister as he has committed himself to protecting the classroom from any additional financial impact. We also recognize that it poses a problem for those boards that have already experienced substantial cuts and believe that they have exhausted ways to save.

*The Minister of Education and Training's concern "that the changes in education will not impact negatively at the classroom level" is a valid one and in fact if the changes being made do not bring about positive impact then they are likely not worth making, because it is the education and training of the children that should be addressed.*

*(Chair, School Council, Northeastern Ontario)*



During our consultation throughout the province, the desire to have class size protected from increases was a common message. There is a fairly consistent belief that it is better for students to be in smaller classes but it was also acknowledged by many that what we consider 'smaller' is dependent on school size, student characteristics, grade levels and the level of community support for students.

#### **That the funding formula to be developed recognize the Minister of Education and Training's commitment and the public's desire that class sizes not increase beyond current numbers.**

The most frequently voiced priority was for a protection of class sizes in the early primary grades. The Tennessee Star and California primary class size reduction initiatives, which are discussed below, were frequently referenced in this regard. Agreeing that it would be difficult, and possibly counter-productive, to set an average for all grades; most respondents suggested that class sizes should be different, depending on grade or division. This being said, we also acknowledge some strong reminders that different programme areas at the secondary level, such as vocational and science laboratory classes, require special consideration for relatively smaller student groups.

#### **That the Ministry indicate average class size targets on a district school board wide basis, and that average class size targets be variable by grade/division and take into consideration the special needs of individual students.**

During our consultations, a variety of opinions were expressed about the impact of class size on student achievement. Similar to the research regarding the correlation between class size and student test scores, views were inconclusive.<sup>22</sup> There are some studies that reflect a positive correlation. However, they have shown that it is necessary to dramatically reduce class size to within a range of 15 to 20 students per class to have a significant impact on student achievement. The Tennessee Star Study, for example, has received a great deal of attention because it documented Tennessee's success in improving early primary test scores in Mathematics and English. At the same time, however, the cost of the State's initiative relative to improved levels of achievement was considerable. In a brief submitted to the Education Improvement Commission by a school trustee in central Ontario, it was argued that in order to achieve the 1.6% improvement in Mathematics scores and 2% improvement in English scores that were achieved in Tennessee, Ontario would have to increase

funding to education by fifty-seven (57) percent.

Added to the cost factor in attaining these apparent improvements in the system, we have also considered how mandating province-wide class size would remove local decision-making and the ability of district school boards to respond to their unique circumstances.

Although there is no research that would support an increase in class size, there are recurrent findings that factors such as instructional techniques, school leadership and the type of programmes being offered will have a significantly greater impact on student learning than will changes to class size alone. Furthermore, as highlighted by Robinson in his synthesis of the research on class size, "because smaller classes do not necessarily produce improved student achievement, emphasis should be directed toward understanding the effects of class size on student learning by grade, pupil characteristics, subject area, and teaching method".<sup>23</sup> Similar to many of the sentiments that we heard during our consultations,

*Although class size reductions are often proposed as a way to improve student learning, research does not support the expectation that smaller classes will of themselves result in greater academic gains for students. Certainly, class sizes should be within reasonable ranges in which the most effective teaching and learn-*

ing can occur. But in terms of increased pupil learning, research evidence does not justify an absolute limitation on class size or small overall reductions in class size or pupil-teacher ratio as a matter of general policy in isolation from the many other factors involved. (italics added)<sup>28</sup>

Given the number of factors other than class size which might have an impact on student learning **and** the diversity of circumstances that are experienced by schools across Ontario, the notion of mandatory provincial maximums or minimums received mixed reviews. While there was acknowledgment by many of the merits of providing some form of guarantee to the students of Ontario, the challenges and negative repercussions of establishing such limits were stressed as well. Most significantly, the establishment of provincial directives in this area was seen as impeding the ability of boards and schools to effectively address their own local circumstances and priorities.

In the case of small or isolated schools it was frequently mentioned that they have fewer options because of the distance from other centres and the broad range of grades that are already placed in each classroom. Representatives from these boards frequently voiced concerns that absolute maximum or minimum class sizes might lead to a loss of students to larger centres or further restraints on the number of programmes they could offer. Similar concerns were

raised by representatives of French language schools, which frequently face the same difficulties. The need for many schools in this system to deal with both French as first and second language learners meant that it was important for them to retain the ability to make staffing decisions at the school level, especially with regard to the primary grades. It was also emphasized that Ontario is characterized by both high and low growth boards with the latter having a generally higher teacher salary base and the former having to deal with the potential of frequent changes to enrollment. For both, therefore, flexibility is important.

### *Recommendation 2.5*

**That schools and district school boards continue to have the ability to establish individual class sizes which are consistent with local needs and priorities.**

General comments emerged across all regions and groups related to concerns that schools would need to be frequently reorganized during the year if sufficient flexibility was not built into class size directives. Many boards that have been working to prevent an increase in class size by making cuts outside of the classroom feared that provincial mandates of any kind might jeopardize local achievements. Given the vast scale of comments regarding the uniqueness of schools and school boards across the province, one participant emphasized the need to view

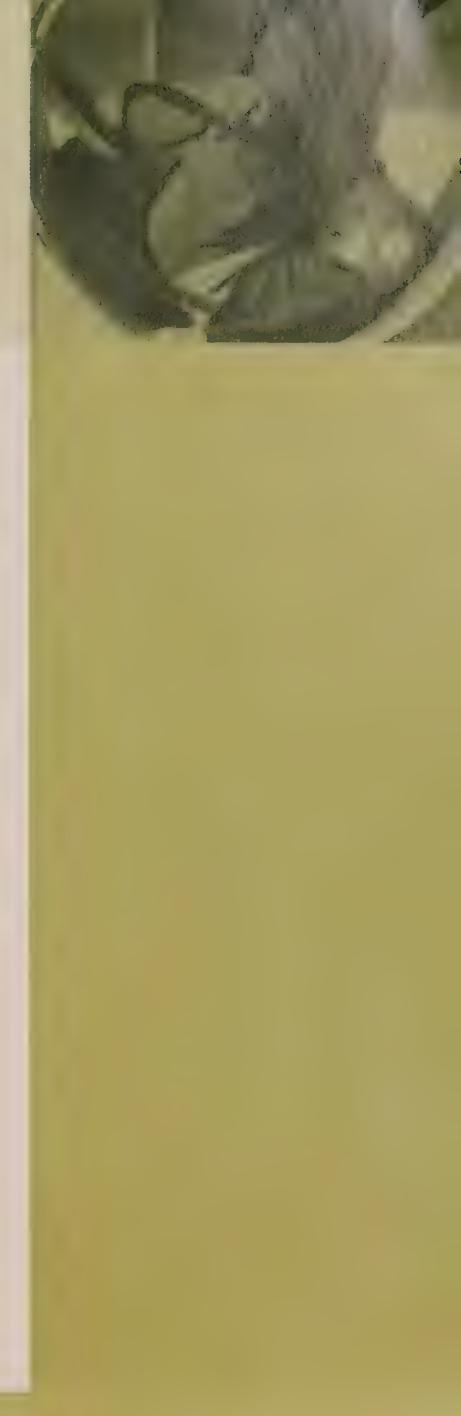
both current circumstances and future plans while concurrently understanding both general trends and unique situations.

The impact of the existing Grade One and Two Class Size grant to control ratios in these grades was frequently referenced. While there was general agreement that it was well intentioned, in many jurisdictions it has had the consequence of driving up class sizes in other grades. Most notably, parents were concerned over increased numbers in kindergarten classes.

### *Recommendation 2.5*

**That the Grade One and Two Grant be folded into the overall per pupil grant formula.**

Also of significance in the consultation process was the matter of how to address students with special needs. For the most part, it was acknowledged that if provincial policy is established, it must include some form of weighting factor for students who require additional teacher attention. As stated in the brief from the Minister's Advisory Council on Special Education, "The Ministry of Education and Training should define a maximum size for a class and then design a sliding scale to accommodate for exceptional students in special education programmes".<sup>29</sup> As conveyed by a teaching representative from the secondary panel, there is also a need to consider the impact of class





***We give because we want to, because we feel good about ourselves, because we feel we can make a difference, because we care, etc. All of this has morale as its basis. When positive morale exists, then "students come first."***

*(Secondary School Representative, Southeastern Ontario)*

***"Group teaching and individual learning programmes break down old formal class organization".***

size on retention rates. There was a fear that an increase in class sizes might lead to increases in the number of students leaving school and higher absenteeism for at-risk students.

Although there were few teacher presentations during the consultation, numerous non-teaching participants acknowledged teacher work load as a legitimate concern related to class size. One participant spoke at length about morale and goodwill and suggested that any decisions to be made around class size need to be put in the context of sustaining morale and commitment to caring in the classroom.

As we stated in the opening sections of our report, we acknowledge the efforts that teachers and school communities are making to prevent cuts from impacting on the classroom. In any considerations for maintaining class sizes at their current level, therefore, we encourage strategies that protect morale through recognition of, and support for, the valuable contributions made by classroom teachers. Finally, numerous participants emphasized student safety and accommodation. In particular, various support staff representatives said each school must consider both the capacity of schools and requirements for maintenance. It was also pointed out that any significant changes in class sizes would have the potential of creating a substantial

demand for additional classroom space, as well as increased demand for special services and staff (a situation already faced by many high growth boards in Ontario).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS OF OTHER COMMISSIONS**

With its focus on supports for student learning, the Royal Commission addressed the issue of class size in relation to enabling effective instructional methods and positive learning environments. It was emphasized that class size decisions be made on the basis of ensuring that students can learn "from others, from the teacher and from peers".<sup>26</sup> The development of a school-within-a-school concept was also introduced as a means of ensuring that students could learn as part of a community of learners through an integrated subject delivery model. These recommendations reflect similar sentiments that were expressed in the much earlier Hall-Dennis report which focused on the need for utilizing a variety of instructional group sizes to accommodate different student needs and different learning experiences. At the same time, however, it was emphasized that younger children require a more structured approach with at least one home room teacher.

Our consideration of this issue has been carried out in the context of both effectiveness and efficiency, as well as public expectations. One of the most convincing points

that we heard repeatedly during our consultations, however, is that province wide legislation should not unduly limit flexibility. We are concerned that a directive which is too restrictive would have negative implications for particular school communities. As outlined at the beginning of this report, we support a flexible system that addresses diversity, while operating within parameters established at the provincial level.

It has become apparent to this Commission that limiting class size must become a collective goal of all members of the education community. The challenge for schools, boards and the Ministry is to implement practices which can protect current class sizes without increasing costs. Many of the most effective solutions to maintaining current class sizes are linked to the issues of instructional time and programme delivery.

### **Recommendation 2.6**

**That schools and district school boards be required to report annually on efforts to respond to changes in funding through strategies other than increased class size.**

Finally, it is clear that the removal of any further dollars from the operation of the education systems will present a serious challenge to the ability of boards to respond to system-wide pressures on class sizes.

Between 1992 and 1997, operating grants

fell by just over \$1 billion. Although some of this reduction was offset by increases in the local property taxes used for education, much of it was absorbed by school boards through service cuts and streamlined operations.

Throughout this period, enrolment in Ontario's education systems continued to increase at an average rate of 25,000 students per year. By 1995, more than 2.1 million students were enrolled in Ontario's publicly funded schools (1.4 million in elementary schools, and 720,000 in secondary schools), and the Ministry forecasts that enrolments will continue to increase until well into the next decade. However, the number of teachers in schools in Ontario fell by nearly 2,000 between 1992 and 1996, from 119,700 in 1992-93 to 117,800 in 1995-96. In this environment, the new district school boards will require a period of stability in funding to adapt to the new provincial funding formula. In this way, they will be able to save money using co-operative approaches among co-terminus and neighbouring school boards and multi-board consortia.

That schools and district school boards be required to report annually to the Ministry of Education and Training, the Education Quality and Accountability Office and the public on average class size, by grade/division board-wide.

#### ***Recommendation 2.6***

That co-operative services among co-terminus and neighbouring school boards and multi-board consortia be required, wherever possible and appropriate.

#### ***Recommendation 2.7***

That any savings realized through the restructuring of school boards be reinvested in education systems.



## (C) Building More Effective Teams

### BACKGROUND

The role of education within society has expanded over time. Rather than focusing exclusively on the traditional function of conveying knowledge and skills to the students, schools have been given increased responsibilities. This Commission recognizes both the value and need for this expanded role, a position that was supported by many during our consultation and that has been recognized in much of the literature.

Additional care related services, often referred to as the "custodial" or "pastoral" functions of education, have had a significant impact on the daily operation of classrooms and schools. Schools not only provide services which were once the domain of the family (e.g. breakfast programmes, values and sexual health education) but a number of services that were once more fully the responsibility of other community services (e.g. health care, social service and libraries). In particular, there are increased expectations for the level of service to meet the physical, emotional and intellectual requirements of high needs students.

The curricular expectations of schools have similarly expanded to include increased demands for a wider range of knowledge

and skills in the workplace and society. These changes have occurred generally without any substantial reduction of expectations in more traditional areas of the curriculum. It is also the expectation that schools will be equipped with the latest technology to ensure that the content and vehicles for learning are state-of-the-art and widely accessible to all students across the system. Naturally this equipment is expected to work well and to be used effectively by both teachers and students. All of these expectations have had considerable impact on teacher work load.

This trend was recognized as early as 1968 in the Hall-Dennis Report, [Living and Learning](#). At that time, the use of assistants was recommended to address the added responsibilities that teachers were incorporating into their workday:

***Due to the increase in both organizational and administrative duties, such as record keeping and other issues, the best way to handle this is by the employment of school assistants and technical assistants.<sup>29</sup>***

In comparison to schools in other countries and in earlier times, Ontario schools have been given a larger role in ensuring that students are exposed to a broad spectrum of cultural and recreational experiences. Extra-curricular activities, field trips, "electives" and many enrichment programmes have further expanded the

expectations now placed on those working within educational systems.

In addition to added responsibilities, it is important to acknowledge the fact that students now begin school at an earlier age and most stay in school longer. The expectation of addressing the needs of a broader age range of students for an increased period of time has expanded teachers' roles in implementing a diverse range of programmes, from the early years of schooling to the senior grades of secondary school.

Finally, the education system has increased business functions as well. These include the busing of students, provision of child care facilities and the extended use of schools by the community. Recently, in addition to these responsibilities, there have been increased public accountability expectations. Educational systems are expected to do more and do it better than ever before. Added to this scenario is the expectation that it can be done with fewer dollars.

### CONTEXT

Increased expectations on schools present a number of major issues for all members of the education system and community as a whole. The fundamental challenge in addressing these issues is to redefine the purpose of education and clearly communicate it to all partners. It is critical that we look at what is being done within education

and decide who can do it best. Most of the increased expectations identified above have been added to the role of a certificated teacher – often the classroom teacher or in-school administrator. It is with this in mind, then, that we restate the Royal Commission's assertion that,

*... the overloaded curriculum, especially at the elementary level, be addressed by distinguishing between the mandate of the school and the responsibilities of teachers within it.<sup>30</sup>*

The third issue upon which the Minister has asked us to comment is, "Ways to give boards more flexibility in their programme delivery and school organization while ensuring that educational quality is maintained or enhanced." We believe that flexibility of programme delivery and, in particular, the staffing and organization of such programmes is the key to addressing the ever expanding demands upon the system.

A significant dimension of this issue is that current legislation, collective agreements and past practice have limited the use of staff other than certificated teachers in the provision of many of these services and functions. As expressed through the recommendations offered in this section, we strongly suggest that changes be made in these areas to enable new solutions to what appears to be a recurring challenge to the education systems in Ontario.

## CONSULTATION

In general, there was strong support for the types of services currently provided by the school systems. There was particular sensitivity to the great diversity that exists and the concern that no one model of delivery would be appropriate.

We were also reminded by many parents of the importance of continuing to provide special services for high needs students, a position that was strongly supported by staff and advocacy groups with interests related to special education students.

The positive impact of extra-curricular programmes was also stressed by many – especially those programmes which reinforce or enhance skills addressed in the curriculum (i.e., co-curricular). It was suggested by some presenters that activities and sports which are not an extension to the instructional programme might better be left as the responsibility of the family and community.

Most respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the services currently provided by both teachers and support staff within their schools. A wide range of views were expressed on the matter of "differentiated staffing" (i.e., the use of staff who do not hold teacher qualifications to deliver programmes and services traditionally offered by teachers). This variety stemmed from a number of factors including the type of programme considered

(e.g., guidance, library, kindergarten), current practices within the board and the availability of local resources and personnel to provide services. It was stressed by several French language presenters and representatives of smaller centres, particularly in the north, that a shortage of qualified staff limited the options for staffing within their boards.

The lack of available services within the community was presented as a factor which further compounded this problem. From French language communities the concern was expressed that there is currently a shortage of available training programmes in particular areas such as early childhood education, library and guidance. This point was raised as well within the Royal Commission report, in which it was acknowledged that the use of community service providers "would be more difficult for French language schools, given the paucity of social, health and recreational services in French."<sup>31</sup>

Directors of education and chairs of boards pointed out that there are a number of challenges faced in implementing differentiated staffing, including the Education Act and Regulations as well as employment legislation (e.g. pay equity, employment standards and Human Rights). We were cautioned by several presenters that if the intent of using differentiated staff was to reduce costs through a lower pay scale, the employment





*This is one area ... where there is a body of research to indicate that good teacher-librarians can make a great difference in the life of a school and help to improve student achievement."*

legislation would require that the roles and responsibilities for the staff be substantially different from the expectations held for certificated teachers. Legal opinions regarding the legislation support this conclusion. Despite this caution, we heard from several board chairs and directors of education that they could see many valuable roles which could effectively be performed by staff with a range of specialized qualifications. It was emphasized that the primary purpose of employing a variety of qualified staff in the school would be to enable teachers to better focus attention on their areas of expertise within the classroom.

Several contributors supported the notion of creating a team of staff which would include persons with various qualifications which best suit them to the nature of the tasks.

### *Recommendation 8*

**That schools and district school boards be encouraged to use a team approach to staffing in order to assign specific roles to certificated teachers and other professionals and para-professionals as needed to achieve programme goals and desired results.**

This concept was particularly stressed in discussions regarding career guidance, library services and early childhood education. Utilizing a team approach recognizes

that there are a variety of tasks to be performed and that the most efficient operation employs those persons whose training is best suited to the specific tasks. Within a library programme, for example, there are many important instructional responsibilities (e.g. research skills and effective access to information) which are best delivered by a certified teacher librarian.

On the other hand, numerous tasks related to the operational aspects of the library could be carried out effectively by a library technician.

While the concept of team or integrated staffing has much to contribute to the delivery of quality programmes in schools, its limitations were also pointed out by those who, once again, reflected the circumstances faced within small schools, remote communities and French language schools. Similar to the delivery of library services, a case was presented that there are numerous dimensions to the role of guidance counselor, particularly at the secondary level. We heard from many, and are persuaded that there are tasks related to career awareness, including the organization and supervision of job shadowing and cooperative education, that can be effectively delivered by staff who do not hold teacher qualifications. Co-operative ventures between school guidance departments and Employment Canada were suggested by a

few participants. Similar programmes are being investigated in Alberta to enable improvements to the career education programme at the secondary level. Comparable pilot projects are currently underway in several Ontario boards.

Also within the guidance programme is the significant traditional role that counselors have played in providing assistance to individual students during times of crisis. Two significant viewpoints were raised on this topic. First, it was argued that there are occasions when the best qualified personnel to deal with these situations are those who hold social work or psychology credentials. On the other hand, we were reminded of the value of the role currently performed by teacher counselors given the shortage of available resource persons in particular communities.

Where available, however, a staff with a variety of qualifications can provide an improved level of service. In the Greater Victoria area of British Columbia, for instance, youth counselors and social workers work together with teachers to provide services to inner-city elementary schools. As a joint venture with the Ministry of Health and Social Services, the costs of programme delivery are shared. A second example is found in Lethbridge, Alberta where the staffing category of "family/liaison officer" has been created to provide services

to special needs students in elementary schools. Again, services are jointly funded through the Department of Health, Alberta Mental Health and the Department of Education.

A final consideration stems from suggestions that programmes such as art, physical education, sports and enrichment music be staffed by qualified specialists from the field. In a recent report drafted for the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, it was suggested that trained recreational specialists currently involved in after-school programming could be employed to run physical education programmes during the school day. A second example, which has been implemented in the United States, involves a qualified teacher, teacher interns and local artists delivering an arts programme to secondary students.

During our consultations we heard of similar programmes across this province. Given current legislation, however, the majority are run as enrichment programmes outside of the school day. In south central Ontario, for instance, a school council responded to programme cuts in a small school by designing a noon-hour programme for enrichment art and music that is run on a pay-what-you-can basis and subsidized through school council fund-raising. The concept of differentiated staffing would see similar programmes built

into the school day, enabling schools to have the flexibility to deliver a variety of programmes through integrated or differentiated staff teams.

Each of the various positions and concerns regarding differentiated staffing reinforced for us one of our basic beliefs, that no one solution to such a complicated problem is appropriate for the wide diversity of circumstances that exists across this province.

Many participants during the consultation, and a number of those who sent submissions, provided us with positive, creative examples of innovative programme delivery and staffing models which have been developed in particular schools and boards. While some of these programmes have achieved considerable success and acceptance, others have been left at the design stage as a result of roadblocks in Ministry policy or local collective agreements.

For example, one rural board in southern Ontario attempted to keep its junior kindergarten programme viable by utilizing existing community facilities and early childhood educators working under the supervision of teachers. This initiative did not come to fruition as a result of the requirement to have certificated teaching staff present in the classroom. Another effort intended to define teacher functions and provide non-teaching staff in exchange for reduced preparation time during the

day was shelved as a result of difficulties stemming from the collective agreement. On the other hand, many boards and schools shared successful models of using non-teaching staff as valuable members in the delivery of library services and other school programmes.

### **RECOMMENDATION 2.2**

That the Education Act be amended to allow instructors who are not certificated teachers to supervise students, under specific conditions and circumstances, and to deliver certain programmes (e.g. guidance, sports, technology).

### **RESEARCH**

There have been few research studies which have focused on the impact of alternative staffing models on student achievement. This is largely due to the limited number of cases where non-certificated staff have replaced teachers in terms of their instructional function. Where studies have been done, the results are based on very limited examples and a short time line (e.g. Ottawa Board of Education study related to using early childhood educators in the junior kindergarten programme).<sup>33</sup>

A second difficulty in drawing conclusions is that each jurisdiction would be measuring from different starting points. For example, for many schools, a study of the use of library technicians would be an assessment



*Innovative and creative solutions are now obstructed by an antiquated Education Act, over-regulated programmes, and a fragmented and reactionary approach. The present grant formula and regulations often act to discourage local cost-savings. Restructuring the education sector can only be achieved if there is a significant change in policy and attitudes.*

*(Ontario Public School Boards Association)*



*School-based services provide a context through which students can receive the resources they need in a familiar, safe and caring setting. In this approach the student is considered as a "whole" individual. All factors are taken into consideration and are integrated into the provision of services. Resources are maximized in this situation since there is no duplication of services.<sup>35</sup>*

*Ministries in Ontario, as in other jurisdictions, have created discreet local service systems characterized by differences and even contradictions in the assessment of child and family needs, and by solutions (to the complex problems of children) that are too narrowly focused.<sup>36</sup>*

*Through stronger partnerships between high schools and colleges, universities, business, parents and the community we can give students the tools they need to set and achieve realistic and satisfying personal, educational and career goals.<sup>37</sup>*

of adding trained staff to a facility which is currently unstaffed. In other cases, it would be a comparison to the use of teacher librarians and in still others the change would be the addition of library technicians to the delivery team. It would be difficult to do a valid comparison based on such varying starting points and types of intervention.

Despite the shortage of research, there has been considerable professional writing done related to the topic of alternative staffing in programme delivery models.

A concept which has received considerable attention is the notion of a "Full Service School".

*The concept of school based services is the first step towards an inclusive school model.<sup>38</sup>*

Central to this idea is the acknowledgment that schools are the centre of community life – particularly for the young. Similar to the differentiated staffing model, it is argued that greater efficiency would be achieved if all services for students were focused within the schools and that the current variety of providers was coordinated into one. It is recognized that both a duplication of services and gaps in support can exist within the current model.

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, in its brief to the Royal Commission on Learning, defined the full service school as "one which meets the needs of the community and lifelong learn-

ers. It must have strong leadership, sound curriculum and caring student-teacher relationships. Professional support services, including those to address health, social support and special learning needs must be provided to meet the growth and career aspirations of all students and to ensure equity of opportunity."<sup>39</sup>

### **Recommendation 3.3**

**That greater co-operation between school boards, community agencies, and private sector companies be encouraged wherever possible and appropriate in order to create renewed partnerships and more effective service delivery.**

In considering the full service school, two delivery options are suggested. One option is for the school system to be funded in such a way that it becomes the centralized service provider. The other alternative, supported by this Commission, is to develop strong partnerships among the various community services, including the family and, where appropriate the church, to draw upon the full spectrum of expertise. During our consultations, there were several who spoke of the challenges of forging such partnerships within particular communities. Despite these challenges, we need to continue to envision new ways of enhancing our ability to deliver an expanded group of quality programmes in our schools. The development of full service schools has

been recommended in report after report since 1968. Now more than ever, as schools face the challenges of increased roles and responsibilities, we need to consider the government's role in "[becoming] the leading partner in creating a public agenda for children and in establishing an integrated framework that ensures that the entitlements of children are met through a holistic system of supports and services"<sup>39</sup>

## **DISCUSSION**

As with our consideration of most aspects of the issues presented by the Minister, we are persuaded that there are few decisions which can be made definitively at the provincial level that have relevance in every context throughout the province. There is considerable evidence that there are circumstances in which a more flexible approach to the staffing of programmes would enhance the delivery options available to boards and schools. It is also clear that there are areas where the Ministry needs to modify legislation to enable these initiatives to take place. Further, we feel that the government of Ontario must examine the various agencies which support the needs of students – to ensure consistency and continuity of service among agencies and throughout the province.

We are convinced of the merits of more clearly defining what needs to be done within our education systems – and within

this mandate, what needs to be done by certificated teachers. Where possible we encourage boards and schools to consider the staffing of schools and systems with a team of professionals, each contributing their strengths to the achievement of the desired results.

Finally, we have reviewed and discussed at length the relative merits of employing early childhood educators within kindergartens. While there are preliminary encouraging results, we would be concerned about moving too quickly on a matter which could have significant repercussions for students – not to mention significant labour implications. Once again, we are supportive of the concept of using a team of professionals, working in collaboration.

#### *Recommendation 3.1*

That the Education Quality and Accountability Office in partnership with The Ontario College of Teachers undertake long term research studies of pilot programmes where graduates of early childhood education programmes at colleges of applied arts and technology are employed in junior kindergarten and kindergarten programmes in schools, under the supervision of certificated teachers.

#### *Recommendation 3.2*

That the Education Quality and Accountability Office undertake long term research studies to determine if

the various reform initiatives currently underway in the province are having a positive effect on the quality of education.

In addition, stemming from our discussions regarding early childhood educators we have been reminded of the excellent skills and preparation that they bring to the workplace. We feel that there are merits to providing avenues for persons who hold these qualifications to enter the teaching profession.

#### *Recommendation 3.3*

That under the direction of The Ontario College of Teachers provision be made by means of articulation agreements between colleges of applied arts and technology and universities to allow the three year early childhood education diploma to be recognized as one means of entry into a teacher education programme.

#### *Recommendation 3.4*

That under the direction of The Ontario College of Teachers provision be made to allow the awarding of a Bachelor of Education degree as a first degree.

#### *Recommendation 3.5*

That under the direction of The Ontario College of Teachers the Bachelor of Education degree be awarded on successful completion of a two-year programme or, in the case of a concurrent programme,

on successful completion of the equivalent of a two-year education programme.



*It may be desirable to consider changes to the academic requirements for entry into teacher certification programmes to include, among others, suitable graduates of Early Childhood Education Programmes.<sup>40</sup>*



# 3. Conclusion and Summary of Recommendations

In this, the first report of the Education Improvement Commission, we have responded to the Minister's request for advice on class size, instructional time, programme delivery and their relationship to the funding of education. We believe that we have also responded to the public's request for a road map which clarifies the direction that education reform is heading.

In listening to the people of Ontario during our consultations, and in reviewing both research and examples from other jurisdictions, we are convinced that opportunities exist for better utilization of the resources available within education systems. In this report, we have made recommendations which we feel will help us achieve this goal. We acknowledge that other resources exist, and we will study these as we move forward with our mandate. We are convinced, in particular, that it is essential to increase the length of time that students spend with teachers in a productive teaching/learning environment. We are also mindful of the necessity of maintaining flexibility in the system to respond to the

wide diversity of local needs and priorities throughout the province.

The Commission, therefore, presents the following summary of recommendations which we feel will assist our education systems to move along the path of reform:

## *Recommendation 1.1*

That the role of the teacher as set out in the Education Act and Regulations be clarified to indicate that the work day for teachers not be limited to the time of attendance by students, and that it include responsibility for extra curricular activities, preparation for class, professional development, contact with parents and remedial assistance for students.

## *Recommendation 1.2*

That the principal be empowered to deploy staff so that the teacher-pupil contact time increases.

## *Recommendation 1.3*

That the number of days in the instructional year for students be increased by two weeks in elementary schools and by

three weeks in secondary schools (which would include the reduced number of examination days).

## *Recommendation 1.4*

That the school year for students begin on the Monday preceding Labour Day.

## *Recommendation 1.5*

That the number of examination days at the secondary school level, currently set at a maximum of fifteen, be reduced to a maximum of ten.

## *Recommendation 1.6*

That the number of days scheduled for professional activity purposes during the school year for students be set at five.

## *Recommendation 1.7*

That a minimum of two of these five professional activity days be designated for assessment of student achievement and reporting to parents.

## *Recommendation 1.8*

That the school year for teachers begin one full week prior to the opening of

school, with at least three of these days designated for professional development purposes under the direction of the school principal and subject to the approval of the director of education.

*Recommendation 1.12*  
That secondary school department heads carry the same teaching load as other full-time teaching staff.

*Recommendation 1.13*  
That recognition be given to the value of preparation time for teachers within the students' instructional day and that the cost be considered in the funding formula.

*Recommendation 1.10*  
That decisions regarding the allocation of preparation time for individual teachers be made by the school principal in consultation with the school staff and in recognition of the varying needs of different teachers with different work loads and at different stages of their careers. In addition, that consideration be given to the bundling of preparation time for elementary teachers so that group planning can be done.

*Recommendation 1.11*  
That the number of secondary school departments be reduced; and in order to increase the integration of learning, that they should no longer be organized by subject; and further, as a result, that qualifications and duties of department heads be reviewed.

*Recommendation 1.14*  
That the funding formula to be developed recognize that, on average, current allocations of preparation time at the elementary level are appropriate.

*Recommendation 1.15*  
That the current allocation of preparation time at the secondary level be reduced by at least 25 per cent, on average, and that the funding formula to be developed reflect this.

*Recommendation 2.1*  
That the Minister, in collaboration with his counterparts in the other provinces and territories, establish consistent data in areas such as class size, preparation time, the number of days in the school year and pupil/teacher ratio to allow for better inter-provincial comparisons.

*Recommendation 2.2*  
That the funding formula to be developed recognize the Minister of Education and Training's commitment and the public's desire that class sizes not increase beyond current numbers.

*Recommendation 2.3*  
That the Ministry indicate average class

size targets on a district school board wide basis. The average class size targets should be variable by grade/division and take into consideration the special needs of individual students.

*Recommendation 2.4*  
That schools and district school boards continue to have the ability to establish individual class sizes which are consistent with local needs and priorities.

*Recommendation 2.5*  
That the Grade One and Two Grant be folded into the overall per pupil grant formula.

*Recommendation 2.6*  
That schools and district school boards be required to report annually on efforts to respond to changes in funding through strategies other than increased class size.

*Recommendation 2.7*  
That any savings realized through the restructuring of school boards be reinvested in education systems.

*Recommendation 2.8*  
That schools and district school boards be required to report annually to the Ministry of Education and Training, the Education Quality and Accountability Office and the public on average class size, by grade/division board-wide.





*Recommendation 2-2*  
That co-operative services among co-terminus and neighbouring school boards and multi-board consortia be required, wherever possible and appropriate.

*Recommendation 2-3*  
That schools and district school boards be encouraged to use a team approach to staffing in order to assign specific roles to certificated teachers and other professionals and para-professionals as needed to achieve programme goals and desired results.

*Recommendation 2-4*  
That the Education Act be amended to allow instructors who are not certificated teachers to supervise students, under specific conditions and circumstances, and to deliver certain programmes (e.g. guidance, sports, technology).

*Recommendation 2-5*  
That greater co-operation between school boards, community agencies, and private sector companies be encouraged wherever possible and appropriate in order to create renewed partnerships and more effective service delivery.

*Recommendation 2-6*  
That the Education Quality and Accountability Office in partnership with The Ontario College of Teachers

undertake long term research studies of pilot programmes where graduates of early childhood education programmes at colleges of applied arts and technology are employed in junior kindergarten and kindergarten programmes in schools, under the supervision of certificated teachers.

#### *Recommendation 2-7*

That the Education Quality and Accountability Office undertake long term research studies to determine if the various reform initiatives currently underway in the province are having a positive effect on the quality of education.

#### *Recommendation 2-8*

That under the direction of The Ontario College of Teachers provision be made by means of articulation agreements between colleges of applied arts and technology and universities to allow the three year early childhood education diploma to be recognized as one means of entry into a teacher education programme.

#### *Recommendation 2-9*

That under the direction of The Ontario College of Teachers provision be made to allow the awarding of a Bachelor of Education degree as a first degree.

#### *Recommendation 2-10*

That under the direction of The Ontario College of Teachers the Bachelor of

Education degree be awarded on successful completion of a two-year programme or, in the case of a concurrent programme, on successful completion of the equivalent of a two-year education programme.

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# 5. Appendices

## **Appendix A** **Minister's Referral**

May 29, 1997

Ann Vanstone

Dave Cooke

Co-Chairs

Education Improvement Commission

13th Floor, Mowat Block, 900 Bay Street

Toronto, Ontario M7A 1L2

Dear Ann and Dave,

I am writing to seek the advice of the Education Improvement Commission on a series of key issues. As you know the government is moving to reform major elements of our education systems. In doing so we have focussed clearly on having high quality education systems in which the achievement of our students is significantly improved. We also need to have systems in which school boards have the flexibility they need to respond to their local circumstances and to reflect the wishes of their communities within the larger framework of provincial education policy. This flexibility will also be important because one of the goals of reform is about doing things differently. Boards must work more efficiently and effectively, and more co-operatively and in partnership with others than they have in the past.

I have today initiated a technical consultation on the proposed allocation model for the school system. I am seeking your advice on the elements below which have a significant impact on the assumptions

and directions we take in establishing the benchmarks in our new fair funding model:

1. Ways the government can ensure that average class sizes do not grow beyond current levels.
2. Issues affecting the amount and scheduling of instructional time that teachers spend with their students.
3. Ways to give boards more flexibility in their programme delivery and school organization while ensuring that educational quality is maintained or enhanced.

In considering these issues and developing your recommendations, I would ask that you review what the best practices and standards are for these items in other jurisdictions, and particularly in the other Canadian provinces. The paramount concern, of course, would be the determination of what is in the best interest of students.

I would appreciate receiving your advice by August 31, 1997 so that I may integrate it with the other advice we receive during the ministry's allocation model consultation which will also conclude at the end of August.

Sincerely,

John C. Snobelen

Minister

## **Appendix B**

### **Consultation Participants**

Below is a list of participants who were able to meet with us during consultations in the later half of June and early July. We would like to thank all of those who were able to attend and share their ideas with us and extend our appreciation to those who sent written submissions to more fully express their ideas on the three questions referred to us by the Minister.

The consultations formally began on Friday, June 20 with a teleconference call to students organizations and continued on to July 26 as we tied up with final meetings in Toronto. As we set off for consultations across the province, we met with school boards, Local Education Improvement Committees, School Councils, teaching and administration staff and students. Each meeting gave the Commission's Co-Chairs, Commissioners and staff from the Research and Policy Branch an opportunity to listen and dialogue with participants. These experiences have been invaluable to us in writing the report and making recommendations to the Minister.

We understand the difficulties that were posed by the timing of the consultations during the summer months. We received a number of written submissions from individuals and groups who were unable to

attend and have incorporated these into our summaries. We regret the absence of a strong voice from teachers in our report. Although we did hear from a number of teachers who chose to contribute their ideas as individuals, most sessions planned for consultation with teaching representatives were not widely attended. As the Education Improvement Commission continues to investigate issues of relevance to all partners in education, we look forward to meeting with all members of the education community as we work to further refine our visions for the future of education in Ontario.

### **EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

*Representatives from:*

#### **1. Chairs, Directors, Local Education Improvement Committees & Coordinators**

- Dryden Board of Education
- Dryden RCSS
- CEFCUT
- Board of Education for the Borough of East York
- Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
- Board of Education for the City of York
- Board of Education for the City of North York
- Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
- Board of Education for the City of Toronto

- Metropolitan Toronto School Board
- Metropolitan Separate School Board
- Metropolitan Separate School Board French Language Section
- Hugh MacMillan
- Bruce County Board of Education
- Bruce-Grey County RCSSB
- Cardiff-Bcroft CRCSSB
- Dufferin County Board of Education
- Grey County Board of Education
- Haliburton County Board of Education
- Muskoka Board of Education
- Northumberland & Clarington Board of Education
- Parry Sound RCSSB
- Penetanguishene Protestant Separate School Board
- Peterborough County Board of Education
- Peterborough Victoria Northumberland & Clarington RCSSB
- Simcoe County Board of Education
- Simcoe County Board of Education – French Language Services
- Simcoe County RCSSB
- Simcoe County RCSSB – French Language Services
- Victoria County Board of Education
- Lakehead District RCSSB
- Lakehead Board of Education
- Kenora Board of Education
- Kenora RCSS
- North of Superior District RCSSB
- Nakina District SAB





- Nakina DSA
- Red Lake Board of Education
- Fort Frances/Rainy River RCSS
- Geraldton RCSS
- Geraldton District RCSSB
- Nipigon-Red Rock Board of Education
- Lake Superior Board of Education
- Upsala DSA
- Brant County Board of Education
- Brant RCSSB
- Haldimand Board of Education
- Haldimand-Norfolk RCSSB
- Board of Education of the City of Hamilton
- Hamilton-Wentworth RCSSB
- Lincoln County Board of Education
- Lincoln County RCSSB
- Niagara South Board of Education
- Norfolk Board of Education
- Waterloo County Board of Education
- Waterloo Region RCSSB
- Welland County RCSSB
- Wellington County Board of Education
- Wentworth County Board of Education
- North Shore Board of Education
- Sudbury Board of Education
- Sudbury District RCSSB
- Sault Ste Marie District RCSSB
- Espanola Board of Education
- Cochrane Iroquois Falls/Black River Matheson Board of Education
- Nipissing District RCSSB
- Nipissing Board of Education
- North Shore District RCSSB
- Halton RCSSB
- Halton Board of Education
- Dufferin-Peel RCSSB
- Peel Board of Education
- York Region Board of Education
- Durham Region RCSSB
- Durham Board of Education
- Campbell Children's School Board
- Essex County Board of Education
- Essex County RCSSB
- Kent County Board of Education
- Kent County RCSSB
- Lambton County Board of Education
- Lambton County RCSSB
- Board of Education for the City of Windsor
- Windsor RCSSB
- Hastings Prince Edward County RCSSB
- Prince Edward County Board of Education
- Hastings County Board of Education
- Frontenac-Lennox & Addington County RCSSB
- Frontenac County Board of Education
- Lennox & Addington County Board of Education
- Frontenac Board of Education
- Elgin County Board of Education
- Elgin County RCSSB
- London County Board of Education
- London & Middlesex County RCSSB
- Middlesex County Board of Education
- Oxford County Board of Education
- Oxford County RCSSB
- Huron County Board of Education
- Huron-Perth County RCSSB
- Perth County Board of Education
- Carleton Board of Education
- Carleton RCSSB
- Ottawa RCSSB
- Ottawa Board of Education
- Prescott & Russell County Board of Education
- Prescott & Russell Césc Dlf
- Renfrew County Board of Education
- Renfrew County RCSSB
- Lanark County Board of Education
- Lanark Lees & Grenville County RCSSB
- Stormont Dundas & Glengarry County Board of Education
- Stormont Dundas & Glengarry County RCSSB
- Cochrane Iroquois Falls/Black River Matheson Board of Education
- Cochrane Iroquois Falls/Black River Matheson RCSSB
- Timiskaming Board of Education
- Timmins Cés RCSB
- Timmins Board of Education
- Hearst District RCSSB
- Hearst Board of Education

## 2. Representatives

### Non-Teaching Staff

- Board of Education for the Borough of East York
- Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
- Board of Education for the City of York
- Board of Education for the City of North York
- Board of Education for the City of Toronto
- Metropolitan Toronto School Board
- Metropolitan Separate School Board
- Metropolitan Separate School Board French Language Section
- Bruce-Grey County RCSSB
- Dufferin County Board of Education
- Haliburton County Board of Education
- Muskoka Board of Education
- Peterborough County Board of Education
- Peterborough Victoria Northumberland & Clarington RCSSB
- Simcoe County Board of Education – French Language Services
- Simcoe County RCSSB
- Lake Superior Board of Education
- North of Superior District RCSSB
- Lakehead Board of Education
- Lake Superior Board of Education
- Brant County Board of Education
- Haldimand Board of Education
- Haldimand-Norfolk RCSSB
- Board of Education for the City

of Hamilton

- Lincoln County Board of Education
- Niagara South Board of Education
- Norfolk Board of Education
- Waterloo County Board of Education
- Waterloo Region RCSSB
- Manitoulin Board of Education
- Sudbury Board of Education
- Sudbury District RCSSB
- Espanola Board of Education
- Timmins Céc RCSSB
- Halton Board of Education
- Dufferin-Peel RCSSB
- Peel Board of Education
- York Region Board of Education
- Campbell Children's School Board
- Essex County Board of Education
- Essex County RCSSB
- Kent County Board of Education
- Kent County RCSSB
- Lambton County Board of Education
- Lambton County RCSSB
- Windsor RCSSB
- Elgin County Board of Education
- Elgin County RCSSB
- London County Board of Education
- London & Middlesex County RCSSB
- Middlesex County Board of Education
- Oxford County Board of Education
- Oxford County RCSSB

• Huron County Board of Education

- Huron-Perth County RCSSB
- Perth County Board of Education
- Carleton Board of Education
- Carleton RCSSB
- Ottawa RCSSB
- Ottawa Board of Education
- Prescott & Russell County Board of Education
- Prescott & Russell Cécs Dlf
- Renfrew County RCSSB
- Lanark County Board of Education
- Stormont Dundas & Glengarry County Board of Education
- Stormont Dundas & Glengarry County RCSSB

## 3. School Council Reps

- Dryden RCSS
- Fort Frances-Rainy River RCSS
- Lakehead Board
- Lakehead District RCSS
- North of Superior District RCSS
- Board of Education for the Borough of East York
- Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
- Board of Education for the City of York
- Board of Education for the City of North York
- Board of Education for the City of Scarborough
- Board of Education for the City of Toronto





- Metropolitan Separate School Board French Language Section
- Bruce County Board of Education
- Dufferin County Board of Education
- Grey County Board of Education
- Haliburton County Board of Education
- Muskoka Board of Education
- Peterborough County Board of Education
- Peterborough Victoria Northumberland & Clarington RCSSB
- Simcoe County Board of Education
- Simcoe County Board of Education – French Language Services
- Simcoe County RCSSB
- Simcoe County RCSSB – French Language Services
- Victoria County Board of Education
- Brant County Board of Education
- Brant County RCSSB
- Haldimand-Norfolk RCSSB
- Hamilton-Wentworth RCSSB
- Lincoln County Board of Ed
- Lincoln County RCSSB
- Niagara South Board of Education
- Norfolk Board of Education
- Waterloo County Board of Education
- Welland County RCSSB
- Wentworth County Board of Education
- Manitoulin Board of Education
- Sudbury Board of Education
- Sudbury District RCSSB
- Nipissing District RCSSB
- Timmins Board of Education
- Timmins Céc RCSSB
- Halton Board of Education
- Halton RCSSB
- Durham Region RCSSB
- Durham Board of Education
- Campbell Children's School Board
- Essex County Board of Education
- Essex County RCSB
- Kent County Board of Education
- Lambton County Board of Education
- Lambton County RCSSB
- Board of Education for the City of Windsor
- Windsor RCSSB
- Frontenac-Lennox & Addington County RCSSB
- Frontenac County Board of Education
- Lennox & Addington County Board of Education
- Prince Edward County Board of Education
- Hastings County Board of Education
- Elgin County Board of Education
- Elgin County RCSSB
- London County Board of Education
- London & Middlesex County RCSSB
- Middlesex County Board of Education
- Oxford County Board of Education
- Oxford County RCSSB
- Huron County Board of Education
- Huron-Perth County RCSSB
- Perth County Board of Education
- Ottawa RCSSB
- Ottawa Board of Education
- Prescott & Russell County Board of Education
- Prescott & Russell County English Language RCSSB
- Renfrew County RCSSB
- Leeds & Grenville County Board of Education
- Stormont Dundas & Glengarry County Board of Education

#### **4. Teaching Staff**

- Board of Education for the Borough of East York
- Board of Education for the City of Etobicoke
- Board of Education for the City of York
- Board of Education for the City of North York
- Grey County Board of Education
- Muskoka Board of Education
- Peterborough Victoria Northumberland & Clarington RCSSB
- Upsala DSA
- Haldimand Board of Education
- Haldimand-Norfolk RCSSB
- City of Hamilton Board of Education
- Hamilton-Wentworth RCSSB
- Lincoln County RCSSB
- Norfolk Board of Education
- Waterloo County Board of Education
- Welland County RCSSB

- Wellington County Board of Education
- Wentworth County Board of Education
- Sudbury Board of Education
- Cochrane Iroquois Falls/Black River Matheson Board of Education
- Essex County Board of Education
- Essex County RCSSB
- Kent County RCSSB
- Lambton County RCSSB
- Windsor RCSSB
- Elgin County Board of Education
- Elgin County RCSSB
- London County Board of Education
- London & Middlesex County RCSSB
- Oxford County Board of Education
- Oxford County RCSSB
- Huron County Board of Education
- Huron-Perth County RCSSB
- Prescott & Russell County Board of Education
- Leeds & Grenville County Board of Education

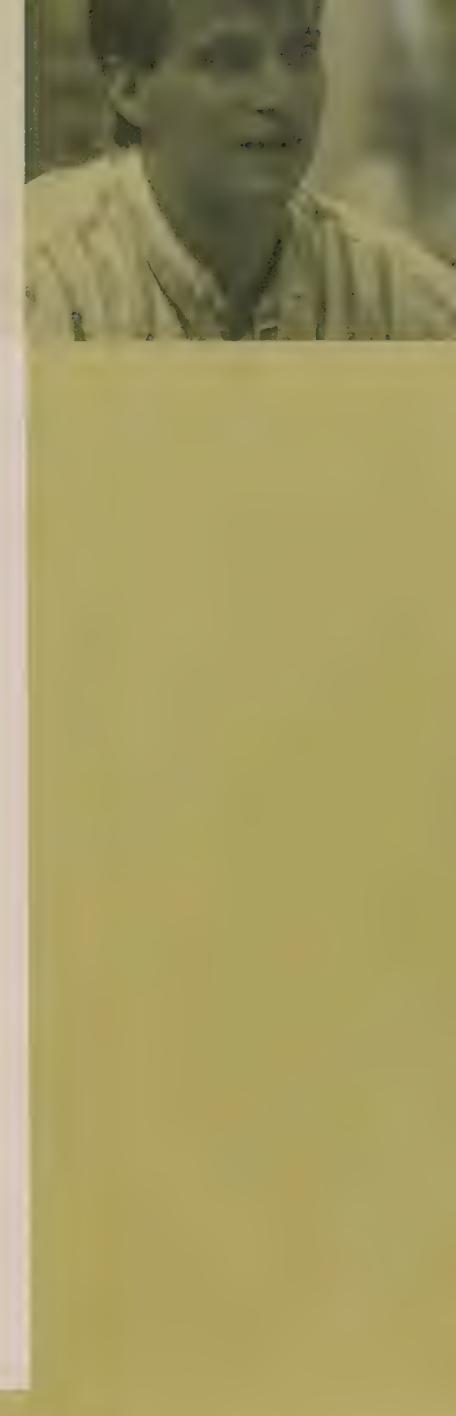
## 5. Students

- Essex County Board of Education
- Carleton Board of Education
- Carleton RCSSB
- Ottawa Board of Education
- Ottawa RCSSB
- Essex County RCSSB
- Kent County Board of Education

- Board of Education for the City of Windsor
- Frontenac County Board of Education
- Lennox & Addington County Board of Education
- Frontenac-Lennox & Addington County RCSSB
- Elgin County Board of Education
- London County Board of Education
- Middlesex County Board of Education
- Oxford County RCSSB
- Huron County Board of Education
- Perth County Board of Education

## 6. Organizations

- Ontario College of Teachers
- Ontario Catholic Students' Councils Federation
- Ontario Secondary School Students' Association
- Fédération de la Jeunesse Franco-Ontarienne
- FESFO
- Ontario Principals' Association
- Organization for Quality Education
- Ontario Parent Council
- Early Childhood Educators' Association
- Council of Directors of Education (CODE)
- Coalition for Education Reform
- Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care
- Metropolitan Toronto Board of Trade
- Ontario Chamber of Commerce
- L'association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO)
- Federation of Catholic Parent-Teacher Associations' of Ontario
- Advisory Committee on Special Education
- Association des agentes et agents de supervision franco-ontariens (ASFO)
- Ontario Association of School Business Officials (OASBO)
- Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association (OCSOA)
- Ontario Separate School Business Officials' Association (OSSBOA)
- L'association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AFFO)
- L'association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario (AFCSO)
- L'association franco-ontarienne des conseils d'écoles catholiques (AFOCEC)
- Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA)
- Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association
- Association of Early Childhood Educators
- Ontario Librarians Association
- Ontario Federation of Labour
- Catholic Parents' Association





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## Notes



Education  
**Improvement**  
Commission

*Mowat Block, 13th Floor*

*900 Bay St., Toronto*

*Ontario M7A 1L2*

*(416) 325-1073*

**[www.edu.gov.on.ca/improvement](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/improvement)**